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TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 2, 1954

Blair Clark came to see me this morning. He is doing an article for the Sunday edition of the New York Times on Mendès-France and wanted my views on him. I said I thought his opponents underestimated his personal popularity in the country and were unaware of the skill with which he has handled his public relations in France. His operations in this respect remind me greatly of the early days of the Franklin Roosevelt era. I thought his handicap in American eyes now consisted chiefly of (1) an impression he might follow a soft line toward the Russians, and (2) allegations of Communist sympathy made about members of his immediate entourage. I told Blair I did not want to comment on what I considered a major, capital, and everlasting mistake -- his cynicism about European integration.

Jean Monnet came to the house tonight and I went off to dine with him in a private room at Prunier's. He talked a great deal about the necessity for his resignation as President and as a Member of the High Authority. He is not dwelling on the past, but wishes to be free to try to sponsor a revival of the idea of European unity in the future. Since his term as President expires in February, he wishes to announce well in advance that he will not be a candidate for reelection. The Assembly is meeting in Luxembourg the end of this month, and he thinks he ought to take steps immediately to notify the various Governments concerned -- since he is their appointee -- of his intention. He believes it will at once become publicly known and therefore, in addition, he ought to state the reasons for his resignation, namely, that, in his opinion, the London-Paris agreements, far from furthering European integration, will harm it.

I argued that, in any event, he should leave a decent interval for the choice of a successor, and certainly should not have his resignation

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become effective until, at the earliest, December 31st. Similarly, I thought it would be undignified and harmful for him to state the reasons for his resignation while he was still a member of an international body. This should only be done after his return to private life if he then felt so inclined. Also, I did not see any necessity for his writing now to the Governments. He countered with the answer that he had some reason to believe the French Government might make known very shortly its antagonism to his reelection. I said I was no judge of that.

He will reflect on what I have said and make up his mind within a few days, but his decision has already been formed as to resignation, although not necessarily as to timing and explanation. Since he is the most original political philosopher in Europe, he will continue, I hope, to evolve ideas and programs.

This afternoon I went over to be painted by Leonor Fini. The portrait is almost finished, and I shall have only one or two more sittings.

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